

SERVICES

IN MEMORY OF

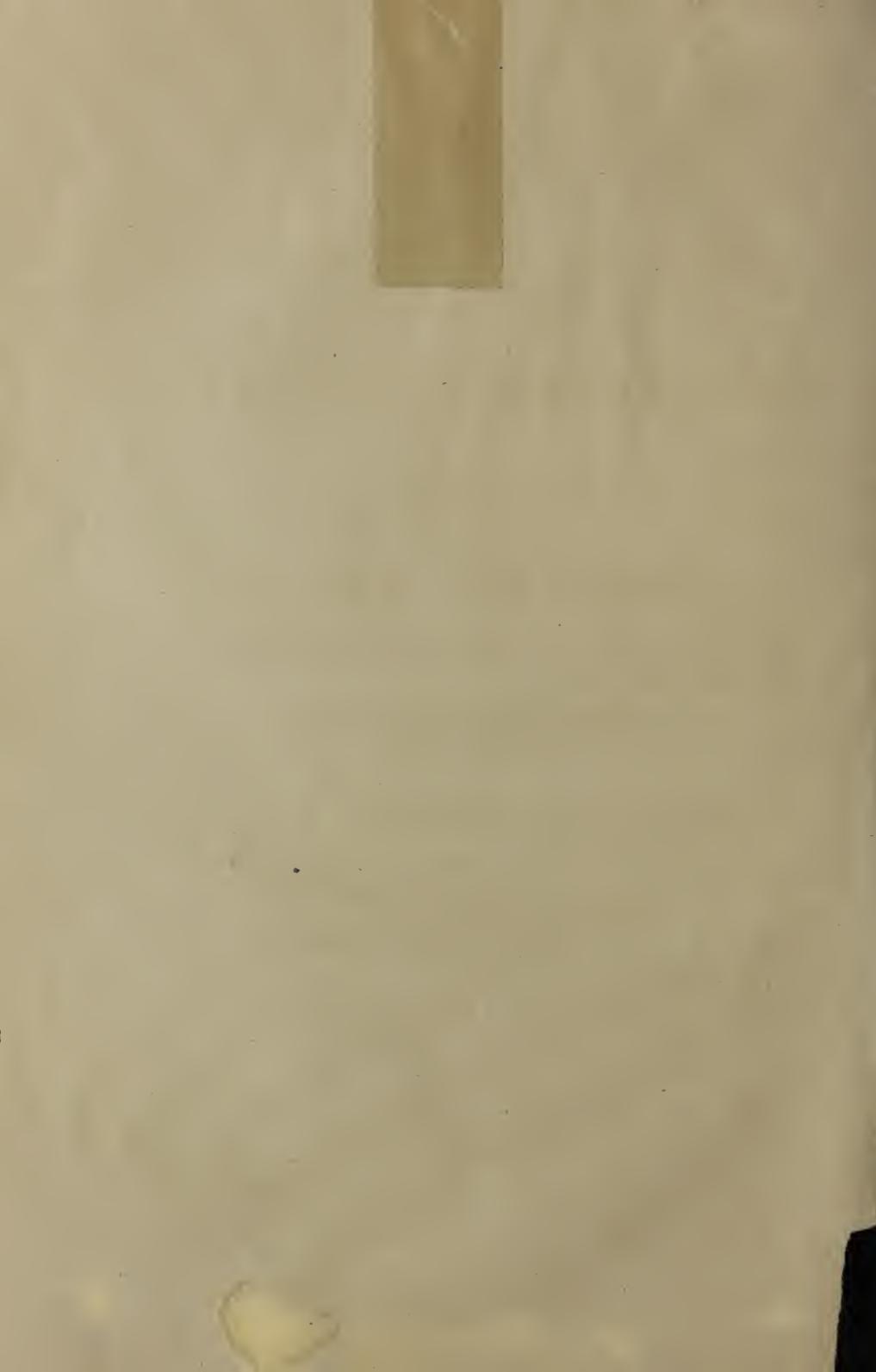
REV. WILLIAM E. CHANNING, D.D.

AT THE

ARLINGTON-STREET CHURCH, BOSTON,

ON SUNDAY EVENING,

OCTOBER 6, 1867.



S E R V I C E S

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BOSTON:

PRESS OF JOHN WILSON AND SON.

1867.

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

BORN AT NEWPORT, R.I., APRIL 7, 1780;

ORDAINED PASTOR OF THE FEDERAL-STREET CHURCH, BOSTON, JUNE 1, 1803;

DIED AT BENNINGTON, Vt., SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1842.

B
C458s

COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE,

OCTOBER 6, 1867.

Order of Exercises.

I. VOLUNTARY.



II. ANTHEM.



III. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, BY EDWARD WIGGLES-
WORTH, Esq., CHAIRMAN.



IV. PRAYER, BY REV. G. E. ELLIS, D.D.



V. HYMN, 83 OF GREENWOOD'S COLLECTION.



VI. ADDRESS, BY REV. E. S. GANNETT, D.D.

VII. ORIGINAL HYMN, BY REV. C. T. BROOKS.

O God ! in thy autumnal skies
 The dying woodlands glow and flame ;
 And, wheresoe'er we turn our eyes,
 All-conquering Life ! we trace thy name.

Bright emblem of that tranquil faith
 Whose evening beams "Good-morrow" give,
 Each leaf, transfigured, mutely saith,
 "As dying, and, behold ! we live."

God of the living, — not the dead !
 Like autumn leaves we fade and flee ;
 Yet reigns eternal spring o'erhead,
 Where souls for ever live to Thee.

From that pure upper world to-day
 A hallowed memory meets us here, —
 A presence lighting all our way
 With heavenly thoughts and lofty cheer ;

A mind whose luminous vision woke
 Man's better soul with kindling might,
 When that calm voice, inspiring, spoke
 For Truth and Liberty and Right ;

A power that still uplifts the age,
 That nerves men's hearts to manly strife,
 That speaks from many a glowing page,
 That lives in many a godly life.

Blest spirit ! with the kindred band
 Of saints and seers, the sons of light,
 Still cheer us through this earthly land
 With tidings from the heavenly height.

Oh, help us meekly, bravely tread
 The path of righteousness and love,
 Till, joined to all the immortal dead,
 We walk in cloudless light above !

VIII. ADDRESS, BY REV. JAMES WALKER, D.D.



IX. ADDRESS, BY REV. F. H. HEDGE, D.D.



X. CHANT.



XI. ADDRESS, BY HON. G. S. HILLARD.



XII. ADDRESS, BY REV. J. F. CLARKE, D.D.



XIII. TE DEUM.



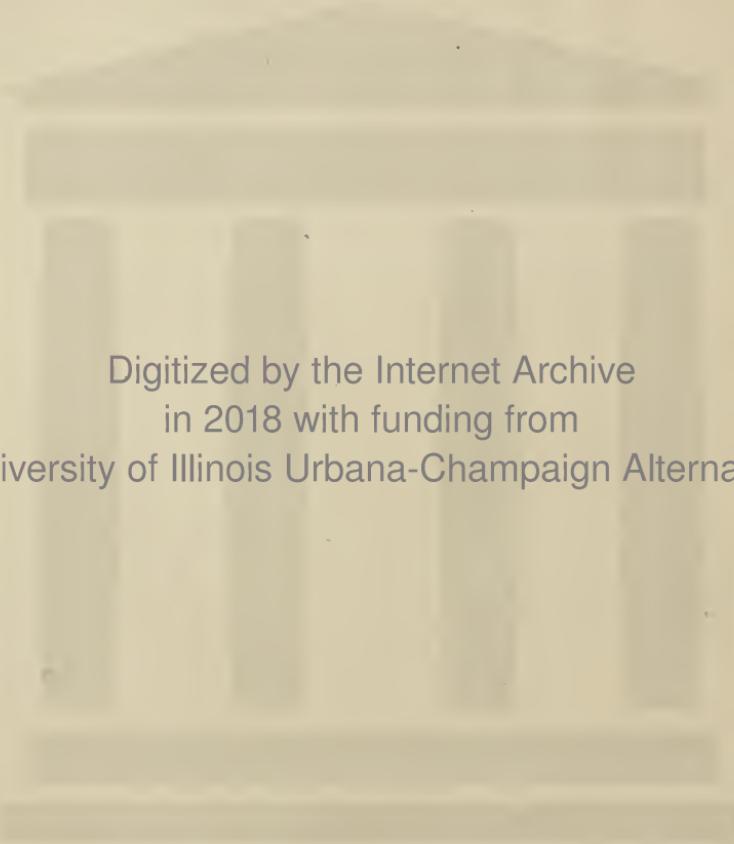
XIV. PRAYER, BY REV. S. B. CRUFT.



XV. DOXOLOGY.



XVI. BENEDICTION.



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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,

BY

EDWARD WIGGLESWORTH, Esq.

I HAVE been requested by the pastor of our society to open this meeting with a short statement of its object. To those who habitually worship here, it is unnecessary to say, that our former venerated pastor died just twenty-five years since; but, to others who may be present, I would state, that his death took place on the first Sunday in October, 1842. At the close of a quarter of a century since that event, it has seemed to his friends a suitable time for holding a meeting to do honor to his memory. As he was the minister of this congregation, we of course regarded him with peculiar interest; but he was a man whose influence extended far beyond the limits of his congregation: his field was the world. As a pulpit orator, as a moral and religious teacher and reformer, as a writer of extraordinary elegance and power, he belonged to the marked men of his time, and his writings are among the finest contributions of America to the literature of the world. Several gentlemen who knew him well, and whom you always hear with pleasure, are present on this occasion, ready to speak to you respecting him.

BURTON HIST. COLLECTION
DETROIT
EXCHANGE CIRCULATE

A D D R E S S

OF

REV. EZRA S. GANNETT, D.D.

IN the usual course of events, twenty-five years are sufficient to obscure the remembrance of the most cherished name. Life is so full of immediate interest, that each generation, compelled to fix its eyes on the present, can give but an occasional glance at the past. The last few years have been so crowded with incident and change, with momentous events and urgent obligations, with scientific discovery and social disturbance and military achievement, with literary production and religious discussion, that they have done the work of centuries. He must have been a remarkable man, whose fame or whose influence has not disappeared beneath such an incursion of new and violent elements. Yet our service to-night is not held for the sake of reviving in this community a proper estimation of the character and life of Dr. Channing. It seemed but right, at the close of a quarter of a century from the time at which the living voice ceased to be heard, that we should join in some expression of gratitude to him from whom we had received the best instruction of our lives, as well as of admiration for one who had secured a place among the world's benefactors. If we wished the service to be our own, on account of the relation which he held to this religious society, we also desired the participation by others, which we were sure a wide-spread sympathy could not withhold.

Dr. Channing's life was kept, alike by his tastes and by his uncertain health, so free from external change, that the interest of his biography rests on the mental and spiritual history which we may be able to trace, and which, happily, is not beyond our reach. We know how the circumstances in which he was placed affected his character, or determined the tendency of his thought; and this relation of the outward to that which was silently going on within alone gives importance to the former. He owed to the aspects of nature with which his youth was familiar and to Dr. Hopkins's theology, opposite as they might seem to be in the instruction they conveyed, much that entered into the growth of his mind; for, with that rare insight which he possessed, he discovered a point of union, in the doctrine of disinterested love which they both taught. The year which he spent in Virginia implanted convictions which a winter passed in the West Indies much later in life strengthened, and which prepared him for the part he took in the political discussions that arose at a still later period. His choice of a small congregation at the commencement of his ministerial work gave him time for study, while the increase of the society brought him into connection with men of high culture and earnest purpose. Even the delicacy of his physical frame, by preventing much active exertion and by protecting him against severe social demands, enabled him to indulge the habit of calm and persistent meditation. His opportunities, whether for improvement or for usefulness, we may regard as having been on the whole singularly favorable.

He began his ministry at the right moment both for himself and for the public. The old style of preaching had nearly exhausted its vitality: the faith of the people had sunk into a dull assent to the doctrinal forms in which truth had been arrayed, or had risen into silent distrust of their propriety; a simpler belief and a plainer exposition of duty were wanted. When that almost ethereal figure stood up, and, with a solemnity so tempered by tenderness that they who listened

in awe were melted into sympathy, spoke of the great spiritual obligations of man, must not the pulpit have gained a power to which it had long been a stranger? The success of Dr. Channing's early preaching requires this explanation. I have read sermons of his, written when he was a young man, and copied by admiring hearers, which even his matchless delivery could not have made appear remarkable twenty years afterwards. One quality was common to his earlier and his later discourses, — intense faith in what he was saying, as the needful impulse and rule of life; a faith that found support in his own consciousness, which had verified the statements he made, and which gave a tone of originality to familiar instruction. He preached from himself, not from books; not even from the Bible as from a statute-book, but as a source of inspiration that was received into his own being before he attempted to communicate it to others. The spiritual electricity was transmitted through himself. It was this personal interest, which, by identifying his own experience with the doctrine, enabled him to employ the emphasis of a prophet bearing a message from Heaven. "I proceed to speak of another great truth," he would say; and though it might be a truth which his hearers had learned in their childhood, it impressed them like a new revelation.

Dr. Channing's influence must be in large measure ascribed to his treatment of the subjects, on which he wrote, as if they were of vital moment. He resorted to none of the arts of rhetoric, or other factitious methods of success. Neither did he acquire influence or notoriety by taking an active part in measures proposed for the public benefit; for he was disinclined, as well as physically unable, to frequent large assemblies. Yet he never evaded an obligation of this kind; and whether it was in Faneuil Hall or in the crowded lecture-room, that he felt himself called to speak in behalf of human rights or social interests, he met the occasion at the cost of much personal discomfort. His private character, doubtless, drew to him

respect and confidence ; for, if few of his townsmen could claim personal acquaintance, the sincerity, purity, and piety of his life shone through the comparative seclusion in which he lived, and illuminated the whole city. The impression that he was cold or unsocial, if it has been received by any one in consequence of a certain reserve which he wore, should be dismissed ; for with his habitual seriousness mingled a genuine and frank kindness, suited to disarm the dread his presence might have inspired in those who felt the distance between him and them. He had a quick sympathy with the difficulties and doubts of other human souls ; and many a troubled mind or aching heart, beyond as well as within his congregation, found in his conversation relief that no other friend could give. Still his writings were the chief means of securing for him the influence he exerted at home and abroad ; and in these writings the sacredness of truth is the element of power. Whatever he wrote, he wrote for the sake of making men wiser and better. Nothing for personal ends ; nothing for temporary effect ; nothing to build up a party ; nothing to mislead the judgment or deprave the conscience of the people. This integrity of purpose — the highest quality in art and in fiction — when carried into the discussion of political, moral, and religious themes, cannot but give an immense advantage. Dr. Channing's clear report of what he clearly saw adds a charm to that which is intrinsically excellent. His drift is perceived, his meaning caught ; and the good seed takes root.

The style of expression which he chose suited the gravity of the subjects on which he spoke, and the temper of his mind. No other style, indeed, would have been natural or sincere. There was little of close reasoning in his discourses : — why attempt to prove that which, distinctly seen, must commend itself by its own character ? It may be necessary to construct an argument to convince men that the earth moves round the sun, but you only need to make them look up to see that the sun shines. The recognition of truth by his hearers was

the aim of Dr. Channing's preaching. Hence his annunciation of truth was positive, authoritative, conclusive; yet neither dogmatic nor dictatorial: at once profoundly personal and sacredly impersonal, because his own experience was the channel through which it passed from the Source of truth. His audience left the house smitten, stirred, determined, through the sympathy with his own deep conviction into which he had drawn them.

In his selection of the truths on which he most often insisted, he was guided, partly, by his judgment concerning the special want of the time. The erroneous representation of human nature that theologians had made the basis on which they raised their systems of religious belief, shocked his sense of justice to man and to the Creator. He enlarged on the dignity of our nature, in its capacities and in its responsibilities. But he took the utmost care to guard this doctrine against abuse, either by theorists or by practical men. He never maintained that the faculties of the soul are sufficient in themselves for the discovery or application of Divine truth. No one has used plainer words respecting human sinfulness, or laid more stress on the need of help from Above. If the materialism of Priestley offended and repelled him, he was far from accepting a psychology that would make man alike the germ and the measure of the spiritual universe. In the wide space between the extremes of depravity and divinity there was ample room, as he thought, for an exhibition of man's actual and potential being.

Dr. Channing was the advocate of freedom, a large and fearless freedom; but not a freedom that disowned reverence or humility. Liberty, in his estimation, was neither the end nor the means, but only the condition on which success depends in the pursuit of a sound faith or a right life. Dr. Dewey, who knew him so well, has justly said, that "in his mind conservative and liberal principles were strongly bound together." He opposed all harsh restriction on the exercise of

thought or speech. Error, infidelity, atheism, had a right to be heard from honest lips. People wondered that he disapproved of the prosecution of Mr. Kneeland; but he, with whom consistency was a law, only demanded for another what he claimed for himself. Yet how temperately, and how conscientiously, he asserted his own right of free speech, I need not remind you.

He was always a learner. Nothing was more worthy of notice, as you saw him from day to day, than that openness of mind into which knowledge was received, from whatever quarter it came. Nature, life, society, the Bible, were all volumes which he had studied, but from which he never believed he had drawn all the instruction they contained. His desire for a more thorough penetration into the meaning of the New Testament was constant and predominant. How often was the question repeated, Is there any new book from which we may get light? While his heart clung to the Gospels as the stronghold of truth, he regarded the Epistles as mines of heavenly wealth, and was grateful to any one who would help him to extract the precious ore. A believer in ideas, he sought them in his own mind, in history, in Scripture; not inattentive to facts, but using them as indications of the more permanent realities that lay beneath them.

The consequence was an intelligent and firm faith. Inquiry did not unsettle his mind, nor progress loosen his hold on every early conceived opinion. Breadth was not gained at the expense of stability. In regard to the authority of Scripture, the supernatural mission and the miracles of Christ, the importance of religious institutions, and the articles of belief which distinguish the Unitarian body from the rest of the Christian Church, he neither hesitated nor wavered. He has been cited as one who lent his countenance to the most radical doctrines; and, again, been represented as adopting at the close of his life a faith which he had always repudiated. Such contradictory statements find their reconciliation in the independence of

ecclesiastical or social control which he asserted and defended. It is easy to select from his writings passages that may be used to support either side; just as it is easy to draw opposite lessons from the Bible. Only he who looks at but one aspect of truth is sure of never being quoted against himself. If Dr. Channing was the champion of freedom, he was not less the apostle of faith. If he encouraged inquiry, he did not renounce authority. If he was hopeful for the future, he was not disdainful of the past.

As he grew older, after meditation and prayer had wrought their work in raising his mind into a clearer atmosphere, he, doubtless, saw the relations of truth, saw truth itself, the manifold truth which it belongs to the religious teacher to expound, as he had not seen them in earlier life. He enjoyed the recompense of that mental fairness, without which progress is only the exchange of one prejudice for another. He would not permit his views to be circumscribed by sectarian bounds, and retreated from any attempt at denominational organization. In this sense, and in no other, he meant to be understood when he said, that, as he advanced in life, he became less a Unitarian. In his almost passionate eagerness to reach more of that truth to which a finite intelligence must be for ever climbing, denial of error could not satisfy him. The positive doctrines which he had done so much to spread, he never discarded nor undervalued. He died, as he lived, waiting for more, but thankful for that which he had; catching the whispers of the Spirit to his own soul, but not sceptical in regard to its more audible speech to other listeners.

In the development of the Christian history, it fell to Dr. Channing to be the leader in a great religious controversy. It was not a prominence which he coveted. No man ever lived, who had less desire to give his name to a sect. He had a purer ambition. He wished, from the thoughts that had reached maturity in his own mind, to prepare an exposition of the laws, by which, as having their origin in the Divine will,

man should be governed in his individual and his social life. The everlasting principles of duty, of which Christianity is the only satisfactory expression, he regarded as the vital elements, without which growth is but decay. To show how the soul's intimacy with God contains the secret of the world's welfare, how personal character is the pledge of social advancement, and how eternal rectitude and impartial love are the pillars of the universe, was the task in which he would have found delight. It belonged to him to convert ideas from brilliant shapes into substantial realities, and with them to arouse the conscience as well as inform the understanding.

Although he did not live to execute the work for which he was so well fitted, his success in distinguishing between the essential and the incidental, in separating the idea from its functions and relations, that they, as well as the truth itself, might be more clearly seen, has given to his writings, fragmentary as they are, a permanent value. They have exerted, and are still exerting, a great influence in this country, and abroad. If here the enthusiasm with which they were once welcomed seems to have abated, may not an explanation be found in the fact, that the country has been brought by the swift course of events to a familiar acquaintance with ideas, which thirty or even twenty years ago were accounted novelties, if not heresies? Dr. Channing wrote from the point of observation at which we are now living. In Europe every year is drawing more attention to his name. Portions of his works have been translated into the principal languages of the Continent, and earnest minds are laboring to spread among the people the inspiration by which they have themselves been lifted above the doubts and fears that needed such a voice to break their dominion.

That his influence will be more deeply felt in the midst of the social and religious activity which it is plain will mark the future, no one can question. While many an author who shall instruct the age will borrow from him impulse and guidance,

multitudes in private will be led by him to a more just appreciation of life, a more filial faith in God, and a more correct interpretation of Christianity. If any be disposed to connect his name with a philosophy that pays little respect to the Bible and a religion that disowns dependence on Christ, let them relinquish their purpose. Dr. Channing's liberality was not so elastic.

It may have seemed to us that he died too soon. In our late national struggle, his calm wisdom and gentle but resolute spirit would have aided us in discovering and in bearing our part as good citizens and faithful Christians. At the present moment, when there is so strong a necessity for us to be governed by neither fear nor passion, such counsel as often fell from his lips, repeated with new force, would be a safe guide for the people to follow. That counsel lives, though the voice of the preacher be silenced, and the pen which never wrote a line but under the fear of God and in the love of man have been dropped for ever. His memory lives, in our grateful hearts. His influence lives, to quicken a generation unborn at the time of his death, and to become light and strength to generations yet unborn. He was honored and beloved while he was with us. Of few men can it be said, that during their lives they enjoyed a reputation which detraction could not reach nor comparison diminish. He was almost the creator of this religious society, which to-night commemorates a ministry that still sheds its benediction through the parents upon the children. He was the admiration of our city, when such men as the noble patriot whose memorial we have received from the hand of filial piety, and the wise physician who has just been taken to his rest, led public opinion. His fame had gone forth, through the Commonwealth and the land, across the ocean, into royal palaces and humble dwellings. Yet all this respectful and fond estimation neither gave him pleasure, nor detained his thought; for he lived, not for himself, but for truth, for right, for humanity, for God. And having so lived, what was death

but more of life,—release from the limitations which encumber effort and oppress consciousness here, entrance into a freer and larger exercise of the powers which had been well used; — the imperishable name he has left on earth, so bright in our eyes, a tremulous ray of the eternal glory into which he has been received.

A D D R E S S
OF
REV. JAMES WALKER, D.D.

HERE Dr. Channing will long be remembered and revered for many qualities, and especially for his distinguished gifts as a preacher. Abroad and in history, he will, I suppose, be chiefly known as a reformer. He differed, however, from most reformers in several respects; and I ask permission to say a few words on these points of difference.

Most reformers appear to be moved by intense hatred of the evils they assail: on the other hand, Dr. Channing was moved mainly by intense love of the good he would introduce. And this is by no means a superficial, or merely formal or verbal, distinction. Practically, as well as theoretically, there is a world of difference in reform, according as it is inspired by love or hate, even though in both cases it is equally sincere and well-intended. He once wrote to a friend, "My mind seeks the good, the perfect, the beautiful. It is a degree of torture to bring vividly to my apprehension what man is suffering from his own crimes and from the wrongs and cruelty of his brother." And he adduces this to prove that he was "made of but poor material for a reformer;" as indeed he was, if by this word we understand a mere hater and destroyer. But if it is taken strictly and literally; if by a re-former we mean a re-constructer, a restorer,—then his clear vision of what the individual and society ought to be, and his earnest

and passionate yearning to see that vision realized, fitted him, better perhaps than any other living man, to do the reformer's work.

Meanwhile, the character of his mind, his aims and tastes, were the best possible safeguard against the besetting sins of the reformer: against self-assertion, against coarse invective, against shocking the community in order to wake it up,—in short, against being a mere denier and disorganizer. The trouble with many reformers is, that no small part of the good they do is cancelled by the evil they do, by the irritations and re-actions they provoke; but it was not so with Dr. Channing, certainly not to any thing like the same degree. Persons of a more conservative or less hopeful temperament might sometimes distrust his estimates of human nature and the power of ideas; even they, however, could hardly fail to wish what he said was true, or to feel themselves lifted up by it, whether they could see it to be true or not.

Again, Dr. Channing differed from most reformers in the means on which he chiefly relied, quite as much as in the spirit by which he was animated. There were few who took a deeper interest in the modern temperance movement than he, or strove more assiduously to promote it by his writings and example. Yet, as his biographer informs us, “such was his habitual love of individual freedom, and his excessive dread of the tyranny incident to associated action, that he never joined any of the temperance societies, or adopted, or advised others to adopt, their pledges.” He knew the arguments in favor of association and concert, and never supposed that these means could be entirely dispensed with,—certainly not in great public and philanthropic undertakings. But, in matters of reform, he was alarmed when he saw how often they were used to coerce or manufacture opinion, to drill men into conformity of feeling and purpose, from one extravagance to another, through the power of a few master-spirits; so that what began in a revolt against the despotism of the community, not unfrequently

ended in the subtler and more effective despotism of party. To use his own words, "The good, as well as the bad, may injure us, if, through that intolerance which is a common infirmity of the good, they impose on us authoritatively their convictions, and obstruct our own intellectual and moral activity."

How, then, it may be asked, did he expect that the great reforms in Church and State, in education and social life, the need of which none felt more keenly, were to be brought about? I answer, by what he pronounced, again and again, to be "the great work of the age;" namely, "the diffusion of intelligence and enlightened religion through the mass of the people."

Since Dr. Channing's death, two writers have appeared, of considerable note,—Mr. Buckle and Mr. Lecky: the former maintaining that there is a necessary progress in society, dependent on the progress and diffusion of knowledge, with which religion and conscience and government have comparatively little to do; the latter, that wide-spread errors and social abuses are never put down by argument or legislation,—they are simply outgrown. There is doubtless a good deal of truth in both of these conclusions; but, as is usually the case with the leading ideas in general theories, it is exaggerated truth: above all, sufficient account is not made of moral causes and providential men. The great reformer is he who, by the utterance of a great thought, gives a new direction to the whole thinking of the age. What constitutes the reforming power of Christianity itself is the fact, that, in the same proportion as it enters into the living thought of the world, it imparts a new element of light and life to human progress. And there is a natural and noiseless way in which this progress may be, and generally is, carried into effect. Observing and thoughtful men are the first to make up their minds on the matters calling for change. They publish the conclusions arrived at, together with the reasons on which these conclusions are founded. Other men read; they see—they cannot help seeing—wherein they have erred, and erred to their own wrong and hurt. The light

finds its way gradually among the people, into the text-books of the common schools, into the education of the common mind. And thus it is that what was a new and startling proposition in one age, becomes the common sense of the age that follows.

Is not this better than organization and contention? We shall probably be told that good men combine to put down abuses, because bad men combine to uphold them. Are you sure that this is not reversing what is commonly the order of events? In other words, are you sure that the combination of bad men, as you call them, is always the cause, and never the effect? Suppose, moreover, that in the trial of strength your combination prevails: what have you done? Unless you have altered their minds, which is hardly to be expected in the circumstances, is it any thing more than carrying a hotly contested election, with the certainty that the struggle will be renewed over and over again?—with the certainty, also, that a new element of disturbance will thus be thrust into every other form of social or political action?

If, then, we would eradicate an abuse which has fixed itself in the habits of the people, the way is plain. Nothing would seem to be gained by arousing men's passions and prejudices in respect to it: we must bring out, into more and more distinctness, the great *admitted* truths that underlie the needed reform, in the hope, nay,—unless our faith in truth is gone,—in the assurance, that, when these truths begin to be *felt* as well as admitted, the reform will take care of itself. And this course recommended itself the more to Dr. Channing, as it fell in with those exalted views of human nature by which, perhaps, he was most distinguished. He had unbounded confidence in the power of the soul to right itself, in favorable circumstances,—in what was good even in bad men, if it only had light and liberty, encouragement and fair play.

Another quality distinguishing Dr. Channing as a reformer was his solicitude to know where to begin and when to stop.

He was not a man to be perplexed or misled by the cry, that it is never too soon to do right, and that the truth can do no harm. Of course it is never too soon to do right; but, while we are agreed on this point, we may honestly differ on another, namely, as to what *is* right. And this remark applies especially to reformatory measures; because here, more perhaps than anywhere else, the question, What is right? is complicated with the question, What is practicable? In other words, what would be right under one set of circumstances would be wrong under another. And so of the truth: rightly understood and applied, it can do no harm: but it may be, and often is, misunderstood, and consequently misapplied; and in this way it can do, and has done, incalculable harm. Indeed, is it not self-evident that a truth misunderstood is not the truth, and will not have the effect of truth,—a law, before which even miracle and inspiration stood controlled. You remember our Lord's words, “I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now.”

For this reason, an attempted reformation is premature, unless the people are educated up to it. Hence, also, a man who is now a Protestant among Protestants may nevertheless hold, and with perfect consistency, that Catholicism was the best religion for the Middle Ages, and Lutheranism the best religion for the sixteenth century. I know there are some who find fault with Luther for coming to a stand in reform: but a little reflection must convince them, as it seems to me, that the world is not more indebted to Luther the reformer than to Luther the conservative; for by the latter what had been gained was secured. If he had followed in the wake of the ultraists of his day,—of Carlstadt, Munzer, and others,—the whole movement, like their ultraisms, would probably have run itself out, leaving nothing but the smoke and ashes of an extinct enthusiasm. Lutheranism was not wanted as a *finality*; still, it was the measure of the receptivity of that age, and, by becoming a fixed faith, it served as the solid foundation for further reform.

Undoubtedly, you can project reforms, just as you can build castles, *in the air*; but to what purpose? It is still true that human progress is by means of a succession of steps; each step being wrought, to a certain extent, into the actual life of the community as the condition of making another step.

The calm, gentle, meditative nature of Dr. Channing was a protest against ultraisms of every kind. If there was any tendency of his mind which threatened to become excessive, and to give rise to extreme opinions, it was his horror of war. Even here, however, his accustomed sobriety of judgment on practical questions prevailed: he never doubted for a moment the right of self-defence, nor the possibility of public wars, which, on one side at least, are necessary and just. In a letter to a friend, who had sent him a work advocating the doctrine of non-resistance, he says with admirable *naïveté*, “I agree with your author in every thing but the *main point*.” Again, his “Letter to the Abolitionists” was an earnest effort, not to goad them on, but to hold them back, by pointing out what he conceived to be excessive in their measures and in their spirit.

Several things conspired to make Dr. Channing seem to concur in new movements farther than he really did. In the first place, all his habits of thought led him to be less afraid of living error than of dead truth. He also looked upon the courage and sacrifice required in the first movers of an unpopular reform, as affording almost the only chance for moral heroism in these easy-going times. Again, he was indignant beyond measure at the attempts sometimes made to asperse the character and aims of the leading reformers. Whether mistaken or not, he knew they were generally sincere men, acting from high motives; and the warmth with which he stood up for them, against a storm of personal abuse, was often construed into an approval of their whole course. Nor was this all: his sympathies, more than those of any other man I ever knew, were with the weaker party, because it was the weaker party. He could not bear to see an unthinking multitude, by mere

force of numbers, trampling out what he conceived to be the inalienable rights of a nascent party or sect,—the rights of free thought and free speech; no matter whether he accepted or rejected what they proposed to do. It is a striking illustration of his character under all these points of view, that we find him at one time addressing a public meeting in Faneuil Hall against the lawless proceedings of the Alton mob which murdered Lovejoy, and, at another, heading a petition to the Governor of the Commonwealth, for the pardon of Abner Kneeland.

At the same time, though Dr. Channing differed from most reformers in many respects, we must not shut our eyes on the fact, that he was himself a reformer; and in this capacity an example, not to reformers only, but to us all. He was an example to reformers, showing them how to mingle reverence for what is good with their impatience of evil. He showed them how to lift up their voice against existing errors and abuses, without striking at the great ideas of religion, government, and law. In one word, he showed them *how to reform in order to conserve*. This, as it seems to me, is the great lesson of his life,—a lesson for reformers and conservatives alike. He saw the mistake of those who, from want of faith in the present, are rushing back into the darkness of the past for ideas and institutions which the world has outgrown; and he also saw the equal mistake of others, who, from the very same cause, are rushing forward into the darkness of the future in quest of ideas and institutions for which the world is not prepared. God has impressed the law of progress on all created things,—a progress which we can do much less than many suppose either to accelerate or retard; for it depends on a multitude of causes, over a large proportion of which we have little or no control. Still, there is a great duty incumbent on us all. Not a few of our evils grow, either directly or indirectly, out of the circumstance, that men's ideas, which constitute the moving element in society, are generally in advance of their institutions, which con-

stitute the stable element in society. The great function of the reformer, or the conservative, call him which you will, is to do just what Dr. Channing aimed to do,—to take care that the institutions of the community are kept in harmony with its highest and best thought.

A D D R E S S
OF
REV. FREDERICK H. HEDGE, D.D.

WE are following the usage of the ancients in commemorating the anniversary of our prophet's death. The modern custom has been to celebrate the birthdays of distinguished men, but the ancients celebrated their death; and what is remarkable, considering the imperfect views of a future existence which we ascribe to them, they called the death-day the birthday,—*dies natalis*. For they held that it was the birth of the soul into nobler fellowships and a freer life. And certainly, if to any who have passed away within our remembrance decease from this earthly world has been a heavenly birth, in commemorating the death of Channing we are celebrating a great nativity. Who in our remembrance needed less of transformation in order to translation? He had as little to put off, in putting on immortality, as any of the old pillar-saints or mediæval devotees who tried to wean themselves into glory by refusing the breast of Mother Earth,—the homely nurse, who as Wordsworth says, does all she can—

“ To make her foster-child, her innate man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.”

Not that there was in him any thing of the ascetic,—any thing of that morbid spirit which looks upon the body as a house of penance, and embraces, in one trinity of damnation, “ the

world, the flesh, and the devil." His view of life was healthy, genial; his habit cheerful, joyous even, so far as physical debility permitted joyousness. He differed from the rest of us, not so much in severity of practice, as in spirituality of mind. In that, he had no equal among all the men whom I have known. And that I conceive to be the characteristic thing in Channing,—Spirituality: living in the contemplation and pursuit of the highest; the habit of viewing all things in reference to the supreme good. All questions, movements, institutions, enterprises, all discoveries and inventions, he judged by this standard. Their spiritual bearing was the measure of the interest he felt in them. Even matters of science—and he loved to read and hear of science—interested him only as they served to illustrate the goodness of God, or as he saw in them an opening into a better life for man. His intellectual orbit had two foci, around which it for ever revolved,—the goodness of God and the dignity of man. How to make the true nature of God believed against the distortions of a false theology; how make men conscious of their divine image and calling, and anxious to realize it,—this was the one perpetual quest of that steady-burning, never-flaring, always-flaming, adoring spirit. In this spirituality lay the secret of his strength, and especially of that overwhelming personality which pervades all his speech, so that you can nowhere separate between the word and the man. By virtue of this, he spoke to us, and we listened to him as one having authority. And curious it was how this man—with-out learning, without research, not a scholar, not a critic, without imagination or fancy, not a poet, not a word-painter, without humor or wit, without profundity of thought, without grace of elocution—could, from the spiritual height on which he stood, by mere dint of gravity (coming from such an elevation), send his word into the soul with more searching force than all the orators of his time. I said, by mere dint of gravity; but his speech had another quality, which made it effective. That was,

a singular perspicuity, the result of a rare combination of calm and intense. Nothing is so eloquent, addressed to the intellect, as luminous statement; nothing addressed to the sentiments so eloquent as intense conviction. Channing had both, by reason of that singleness of mind which begets both. When the thought, which is the eye, is single, the whole speech, which is the body, is full of light. In conversing with the writings of Channing, we move in a world of exceeding day. There are no dark corners in his thought, no cloud-shadows on his discourse, no *chiaroscuro*, no twilight mysteries; it is all clear sky, and broad, effulgent noon,—owing in part, it must be confessed, to the singular want, in so distinguished an intellect, of all speculative proclivity, and, consequently, of all metaphysical scruples. He saw no difficulties, or none of the deeper difficulties, which perplex metaphysical minds. The imaginary objections which he considers, the imaginary opponents against whom he argues in his essays, are all of the most superficial kind. His lofty Theism, which lies at the basis of all his teaching, was assumed apparently without question. His Christology, his doctrine of Christ, so edifying on the moral side, is loose on the critical. A scientific theologian he certainly was not; not a profound thinker; but, what is vastly more important, a very clear thinker and a wonderfully luminous writer. The critic and metaphysician may be disappointed in his writings; but they find an unfailing response and abundant justification in the common sense of mankind.

Side by side with the spirituality so characteristic of Channing, I place his scarcely less characteristic honesty. The action of this quality in private made conversation with him, to a young man especially, somewhat embarrassing. You missed those smooth insincerities which hide or soften milder disagreements and facilitate colloquial intercourse. You made your statement; if he accepted it, it was well; he was sure to furnish, from the riches of his mental experience, some apt comment, illustration, or application. If he rejected it, it was

equally well ; there was then opportunity and scope for friendly debate. But the chances were that he would neither accept nor reject, but receive it with dumb gravity, turning upon you that calm, clear eye, and annoying you with an awkward sense of frustration, as when one offers to shake hands, and no hand is given him in return. But, as speaker and writer, this honesty established for Channing a peculiar claim, through the confidence it inspired, that the unadulterated sense of the man was in his speech. He might not see very far in some directions ; but he saw with unclouded eye, and reported only what he saw. His judgment took no bribes. That is what can be said of very few of the writers or speakers of our time, I fear, or of any time. In theology at least, I know very few whose judgment does not seem to be vitiated, corrupted, by one or another influence, from within or from without, by position or passion. Some are warped by sectarian bias, some by worldly interest, some by fear of public opinion or of losing the bands of authority ; and a great many more by lust of distinction, by jealousy of ecclesiastical domination, by impatience of traditional beliefs which they want the power to comprehend. Conservatives are bribed by the love of stability ; radicals are bribed by the lure of novelty and the charm of defiance. Channing was unbribable. He had no interest to serve, aside of the truth ; no crotchet of the brain to pamper or defend. He was neither conservative nor radical, but a simple child of the light, bringing to the truth no prism, but a mirror ; and giving back, without color or shade, the illumination he received. This honesty declares itself in his style. What a remarkable style it was ! No purer English has been written in our day. So colorless, and yet so impressive, so natural, yet so exact. He never courted attention by the turn of a sentence or a trick of words ; he used no flavors ; he practised no distortions to make truisms pass for more than they were worth. If his thought was commonplace, he said it in a commonplace way. He never tried to disguise it

by a pert and perky way of putting it, by smart phraseology, or inverted syntax: if his thought was weighty, its simple weight sufficed, and a perfectly colorless style sufficed for its presentation. He never aims to be smart, he never aims to be quaint, but just walks through his pages with a sober, steady, dignified gait, and never capers and never struts.

His faith in humanity was another characteristic trait. He cherished an immense hope for the race. He believed in liberty; he glowed for it; if need were, I think he would have died for it. A characteristic anecdote was told of him, that, in the year 1830, when the tidings came of the revolution in Paris which dethroned Charles the Tenth, he hurried from Newport to Boston, to exchange congratulations with his friends on the subject, but found them unexpectedly cold and unsympathizing. He could not understand it. Meeting one of them, he said, "Are you, too, so old and so wise as to feel no enthusiasm for the heroes of the Polytechnic School?"—"Ah!" replied his friend, "you are the youngest man I have met with."—"Yes," said Channing, "always young for liberty."

What,—now that twenty-five years have rolled over his grave,—what is the present, and what is to be the final significance of Channing? In the world of letters, in the world of scientific theology, not so great as that of many of his contemporaries: in the world of ideas and ideal characters, a most weighty name and a semipiternal power. Of all the men of modern time, he stands for spiritual freedom. Although not an iconoclast, not a denier, but eminently an affirmative spirit, he represents the emancipation of the mind from all unrighteous thrall. His theology was never popular, and I suppose it never will be. What Renan says of it is probably true: "It demands too great intellectual sacrifices for the critic, and too little for those with whom it is a necessity to believe." But the final judgment of posterity will know how to separate between the creed and the man, as it does in the case of St. Augustine and of Fenelon. The creed is costume,

the spirit is the man. No man by accident wins enduring fame. Circumstances, popular illusion, may confer a transient and local repute; but the heroes who outlive the applause of their day, the heroes whom posterity accepts, whom the wise of other lands install in their Valhalla, have a right to their pedestals. Hear the judgment of one of the most learned, acute, and Christian scholars of this century, concerning Channing, pronounced many years after his death. The late Baron Bunsen, in a work entitled "God in History," selects from the Protestant Church five worthies, who stand pre-eminent, in his judgment, as representatives of the Divine presence in man, — Luther, Calvin, Jacob Böhme, Schleiermacher, Channing. And this is what he says of Channing: "In humanity a Greek, in citizenship a Roman, in Christianity an apostle." — "If such a man, whose way of life, in the face of his fellow-citizens, corresponded to the Christian earnestness of his words, and presents a blameless record, — if such a one is not a Christian apostle of the presence of God in man, I know of none."

A D D R E S S
OF
H O N. G E O R G E S. H I L L A R D.

SOUTHEY, in a letter written in declining life, said that he had reached an age when twenty years seemed but a short time to look back upon. I am old enough to feel the truth of this remark ; and I never felt it more than I do to-night. It seems to me like a dream that it is now twenty-five years since the death of Dr. Channing. His face, his person, the tones of his voice, are as distinctly before me as if I had seen him and listened to him to-day. Strong impressions, made at an early and susceptible period, are strengthened rather than weakened by time.

Dr. Channing was an eminent writer and thinker. Few men are better represented by their writings than he. In them we see what manner of man he was ; in them and by them, being dead, he yet lives and speaks. His influence as an author can be fairly estimated by all who read the English tongue. It can be measured as well in England as in America,—as well by those who were strangers to his person, who never heard his voice, who have been born since his death, as by those who sat under his preaching, and can never read one of his sermons without recalling his looks, his tones, and his gestures. And it is a high, an enduring, influence. It has not passed away, and will not pass away. It will last as long as the love of truth, of goodness, of purity, exists in the

human soul. When the writings of Dr. Channing are no more read, it will be a sad day, alike for the Christian, the philanthropist, and the patriot.

But there was an inner, a nearer, a closer circle of admiration, gratitude, and love. That circle we represent. This was his parish, and we were his people. He was our spiritual teacher, our pastor, our friend. He broke the bread of life to us. He baptized our children. He poured balm and oil into our hearts, when bleeding with the wounds of bereavement. He comforted the sick, and prepared the dying to meet their Maker. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and there is a joy that the stranger intermeddleth not with." The stranger that is within our gates to-night can never know what he was to us, and what a void was left when he was taken from us. A new generation has sprung up since his death, and time has thinned the ranks of those who knew him. How many honored heads among his parishioners, with whom I was familiar in my youth and early manhood, are now seen no more on earth! But there are some yet living who reverently, affectionately, gratefully remember him, as a pastor and a friend; and for them, and as one of them, I would speak. I would speak as a layman, as one of his parishioners, and try to give some impression of what he was as a religious teacher, a spiritual guide, a Christian clergyman.

Dr. Channing had a just and high sense of the worth of his profession. He would have wished to be tried and judged by what he did and what he was as a preacher of the gospel of Christ. Had he failed here, he would have looked upon even higher literary honors than those he won as no equivalent compensation. He put his whole mind, his whole heart, his whole soul, into his sermons. Though some of his most popular productions appear as pamphlets, or as contributions to periodical publications, yet his sermons are not inferior, in substantial merits of thought and style, to his other writings.

It was not until the last ten or twelve years of his life that

I regularly and habitually heard him in the pulpit. He did not then preach constantly, or very often ; and, when it was known that he was to officiate, our old Federal-street church was generally filled with an eager and expectant congregation, comprising many strangers, attracted by interest or curiosity to hear so celebrated a man : and certainly no stranger could ever have been disappointed in him, though some may not have carried away exactly the impression they anticipated. For he was not a rhetorician, and not an orator, as these words are commonly understood. His person was not commanding ; his manner was not dramatic ; his voice, though sweet and flexible, was never powerful, and sometimes showed the feebleness of ill-health ; and there was nothing in the style or delivery of his sermons that courted popular applause. Nor was his range of topics wide or various. The nature of God, the character of Christ, the future life, the powers and capacities of the human soul, the evil and degradation of sin, the obligation of the moral law,—these were the grand and simple themes on which he loved to dwell. And there was no point, no glitter, no epigram, no paradox, in his style. There were no sudden turns or startling surprises in his sermons. His opening sentences were simple and direct, and generally spoken in a natural and almost conversational tone. His manner was grave and earnest, marked by a deep sense of the importance of his trust as a religious teacher. The hearer could not fail to be impressed with a combination in him of profound religious feeling with a philosophical understanding and a poetical imagination. Whatever might be the subject of his discourse, it was suffused with a rich ideal light, like that of the sun upon a vernal landscape. His taste was instinctive and unerring. The beauty of his style was the natural expression of the beauty of his soul. As he went on, as the stream of thought widened and deepened, his manner underwent a corresponding change. His countenance glowed with deep feeling, his delicate and fragile form seemed to expand, and his voice rose and

swelled till it filled with its rich music every part of the building. With how deep a stillness, with what reverent attention, with what rapt faces, with what suffused eyes, he was listened to! and, when he had closed, the profound silence of his hearers would for a moment be undisturbed by any movement, as if they were reluctant to descend from the elevated regions of thought and feeling into which they had been borne.

Nor was the effect of such preaching transient. It was not felt in the blood and in the pulse, but it passed into the heart and soul with invigorating, purifying, elevating power. The teachings we heard on the Sunday went with us into our several paths of duty during the week. They made goodness seem more lovely, and sin more ugly. They helped us to resist temptation. They made the way of sacrifice and renunciation more easy to our feet. In the watches of the night, we heard again that voice of persuasive power. The form and face of our teacher seemed by our side, to warn, to encourage, to command. His sermons helped to build up our spiritual and religious life; and if there was, if there be now, any thing in us of the power of religious faith, any thing of aspiration towards heavenly things, to them we trace no small portion of it.

In speaking of Dr. Channing as a preacher, we should not overlook his influence upon the pulpit literature of his country. And here his name is associated with that of another, a kindred spirit. It is a striking fact, that, at the beginning of this century, in the then small town of Boston, there were two such clergymen as Mr. Buckminster and Dr. Channing. Mr. Buckminster died at the age of twenty-eight years. Bright as the morning dew, like that he was early exhaled. But few men, in any age or country, have in so short a life done so much or left such a record. And he was a being made in the prodigality of nature. With a face of angelic beauty, a voice of music; with social tastes, fascinating manners, an ardent love of knowledge, and exquisite scholarship,—he was yet most

of all remarkable for the spiritual purity of his character, and his deep religious feeling. Who can wonder at the admiration, the reverence, the love, inspired by this radiant creature, so full of physical, intellectual, and spiritual beauty ; so crowned with the best flowers of earth and of heaven ! Who can wonder, when he was laid in his early grave, that the weeping friends who stood around it felt that it was not so much a man that had died, as an angel that had been called home !

The sermons of Mr. Buckminster and the sermons of Dr. Channing are in some respects unlike, as the men were unlike in temperament and mental structure. But they are alike in their union of strong religious feeling and high literary finish ; and they are alike in the influence they exerted upon the New-England pulpit. They form an era in the literature of the country. The standard of preaching is high in New England. In no other country are so many good sermons produced, and in no other country does public sentiment exact so much from the clergyman. I think these results are in no inconsiderable degree owing to the sermons of Mr. Buckminster and Dr. Channing.

During the years of my personal acquaintance with Dr. Channing, his pastoral duties were, in a great measure, devolved upon his colleague ; and at all times his social relations to his people were affected by his delicate health and his studious, secluded habits. He did not mingle much in general society ; but this was not because his mood was ascetic, or his tastes solitary. He was warmly attached to his friends, though his greeting sometimes showed his want of animal spirits and the exhaustion left by the severe intellectual toil in which the earlier hours of his day were generally spent. But his manners were always marked by a gentle courtesy, a peculiar mixture of gravity and sweetness ; and a few moments of sympathetic conversation acted like a cordial upon his frame and spirits. He was not a reader of many books ; he never possessed a large library, and there were many subjects on which

he had never read at all: but he had an active intellectual curiosity, and delighted to talk with those who could add any thing to his stores of knowledge, or give him new subjects for reflection. As is often the case with those whose youth and early manhood are clouded with ill-health or poverty or self-distrust, I think his enjoyment of life became greater, and his circle of sympathy wider, as he grew older. His life and conversation showed how the fields of the mind are kept green by streams which flow from the fountains of the heart. In speaking of his friend George Cabot, he said "he wanted what may be called the wisdom of hope;" but of this wisdom he himself had a large share, and never more of it than in the last years of his life.

In declining life, his thoughts turned more to practical than to speculative themes. They dwelt upon the horrors of war, the evils of slavery, the burdens of poverty, the dangers of ignorance. All schemes of social reform awakened in him a deep interest. He had a burning hatred of injustice, oppression, cruelty,—of wrong in every form. His delicate frame inclosed the spirit of a hero, the soul of a martyr; and, had the path of duty lain that way, he would have confronted "the lifted axe and agonizing wheel" with a serene brow and an unaltered cheek. He had the keenest sense of "man's inhumanity to man." His thoughts dwelt upon, and his spirit was saddened by, the huge and dark masses of suffering, ignorance, and crime, with which the face of modern civilization is deformed.

As might have been expected from his fine organization and poetical sensibility, he had a strong sense of the beauties of nature. He was an admirer of the poetry of Wordsworth, long before it was the fashion to admire it. Here he found, for the first time, full expression given to that love of Nature which he had always felt, and that communion with Nature which he had always enjoyed; and, to the last, the grand and beautiful scenes of the outward world fell upon his spirit with sooth-

ing, elevating, refreshing power. The glories of sunset, the flush of color in our autumnal woods, the ocean,—whether glittering in calm, or dark-heaving in the storm,—the strength of the hills, the beauty of the valleys, were ever to him sources of delight and inspiration.

It was my fortune to see him in the summer of 1842, not long before his death, in the midst of some of the most beautiful scenery of New England, and surrounded by young persons on whose natural expressions of happiness his presence laid no restraint; for perfect love had come to cast out fear. Never had I seen him in more full enjoyment of life, or more gently winning in conversation and manner. Never did he seem younger in spirit. With what delight his glowing eye ran over the rich landscape around him! What pleasure he showed in communing with the cultivated minds and sympathetic hearts that were drawn to him! On taking leave of him, I little thought that I should see his face no more on earth; for never had he appeared in better health, or more full of life and hope. But it was well that he was called away, with his eye undimmed and his natural force unabated, before decay or infirmity had touched the chords of his finely fibred frame, and tuned their music into silence or discord. It was well for him, it is well for us; for thus there is mingled with the precious memories of this hour nothing which we could wish to forget. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

A D D R E S S

OF

R E V. J A M E S F. C L A R K E, D.D.

IN asking me to say a few words in conclusion, you have given me, sir, a hard task ; for what can be added to what we have already heard to-night ?

When, twenty-five years ago to-day, the hills of Berkshire stood solemn watchers while Channing breathed his last breath of earth, the hearts of all noble men were moved, and two of our best poets laid a laurel-wreath on his tomb. One of them was moved to write these lines :—

“Thou livest in the life of all good things ;
The words thou spak’st for freedom shall not die.
Thou sleepest not, for now thy faith has wings
To soar where hence thy hope could hardly fly.

And often, from that other world, on this
Some gleams, from great souls gone before, may shine,
To shed on struggling hearts a clearer bliss,
And clothe the Right with lustre more divine.”

It is twenty-five years since Channing died ; but, during all these years, his spirit has been working in the Church and in the nation. His faith in man, in progress, in freedom, has been more and more received ; and were he to look upon us now, as perhaps he is looking, he would see that his ideas are becoming the commanding opinions of the land and time,—the “master-lights of all our being.”

Twenty-five years have already brought a new generation on the stage,—one which did not know him. Were he here, he would be eighty-seven years old. It is sixty-four years since

he was ordained. I am glad to have the opportunity to tell those younger than myself of what Channing was to my generation,— first, by his writings ; and then by his character.

At the time when Channing began to preach, a certain lethargy prevailed in the Church. A sleepy orthodoxy and a drowsy liberalism stood side by side in our pulpits. The letter, which kills, had destroyed the living spirit. “The word of the Lord was precious in those days ; there was no open vision.” I have heard my grandfather, Dr. Freeman, describe the electric effect produced, first by Buckminster, and then by Channing. Dr. Freeman belonged himself to the old school of Unitarians ; he was a scholar of Priestley and Belsham ; but he had the head and the heart to see and love the genius of a man like Channing. He spoke of him as the greatest of thinkers, when as yet he was not widely known to fame. Channing rose out of the region of opinions into that of ideas. The ideas of human nature, of freedom, of reason, and of progress, filled him with prophetic enthusiasm, and caused him to speak with the tongues of men and of angels. Who that ever heard him can forget that solemn fire of his eye, that profound earnestness of tone, which took and held captive all minds, from the beginning to the end of his discourse ? There was nothing like it, nor second to it, in any pulpit of America. It was not oratory, it was not rhetoric : it was pure soul, uttering itself in thoughts clear and strong as the current of a mighty stream,—

“ Though deep, yet clear ; though gentle, yet not dull ;
Strong, without rage ; without o'erflowing, full.”

As we listened, we forgot the weak tabernacle : we were mastered by the thought of that mighty soul, which —

“ Fretted the puny body to decay,
And o'erinformed its tenement of clay.”

The earth seemed good to live in, while we listened to him. It was a great thing to be a man. Life was too short for what we wanted to do in it. Christianity was such a holy gift, that

to serve it was joy sufficient for this world. I know one, who never would have been a Christian minister if he had not heard Channing, who blesses him to this hour for having directed his steps into so noble a field of duty. The writings of Channing went through America and over Europe, and filled millions of readers with admiration and love. I heard of a man in Wisconsin, who, unable to buy the volume, copied with his pen the whole of it from beginning to end. When Dr. Channing wrote his book on slavery, I was living in Kentucky, and reprinted several chapters in a monthly journal I then edited there; and they were read with interest by thousands. I knew a Kentucky planter, to whom I gave his Letter to Henry Clay, who had it bound up with blank leaves, and took it in his pocket as he rode through his fields, filled it full of notes, and returned it. His son afterwards became attorney-general under Abraham Lincoln, and one of the strongest supporters of emancipation. Who can tell how far Channing's thought has gone, and how much of it was seed which grew up and bore a hundred-fold in the emancipation of America?

But it was not merely the great thought of Channing, but his pure character, which has borne this fruit. He gave an example of personal nobleness in all his life. He was the most accessible of men. Young men, poor men, unknown men, could go and see him, and find him as ready to talk with them as with the European *savans* and British noblemen, who, as soon as they landed in Boston, would find their way to the study of Dr. Channing on Mount-Vernon Street.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Channing for his kindness to me, when, comparatively a young man, I commenced a church in this city,—in some respects differing from those then established. He sent for me to come and see him, gave me invaluable advice and encouragement, and even came himself, evening after evening, to the hall where we worshipped, and took a chair near the pulpit. Before that, when I edited the “Western Messenger,” he wrote for it a long and very valuable

article on Catholicism, which any of the great reviews in England or America would have thankfully received, but which he gave to this obscure Western periodical. His kindness to all young men, to all struggling enterprises, his sympathy with every attempt to improve the age, came from his generous interest in truth, and his large expectation. When Mr. Garrison was the most unpopular man in Boston, and he the most admired, Dr. Channing took him by the hand. When Abolition and Abolitionists were odious, Dr. Channing laid the weight of his great character in this scale. Of all the events of his life, there is nothing more noble than that which was described afterwards by Miss Martineau. She says, that, when a committee of the Massachusetts Legislature was in session to inquire whether some Act should not be enacted, making it a penal offence to publish, here in Massachusetts, any thing against Southern slavery, and Mr. Garrison and his friends came before that committee to protest against any such law being passed, the door of the committee-room opened, and there stood Dr. Channing. He was invited by the committee to come and sit with them: but he walked across the room, came up to Garrison, took him by the hand, and sat down by his side; thus showing his determination, as he did on all occasions, to stand by any one whom it was attempted to oppress, no matter what was the weight of power against him.

In one of the last conversations I had with him, he told me, as Dr. Gannett has already intimated, that the wish of his life had been to write a work which should embody his views on the Philosophy of Man and on General Theology; "but," said he, "the cause of freedom demands all the little strength I have. I am continually called upon, by the occasions of the hour, to write pamphlets, which task all my strength; and I shall never be able, I foresee, to do the work which I had hoped was to be the work of my life."

Among all his noble traits, this ceaseless expectation, this undying hope, this sympathy with every new person who had

any thing to say for himself, every new movement which promised any thing for itself,—this expectation, so tranquil and calm, but so ready, was one of the noblest.

Some men live always on the plane of what is common: they live in averages, and take life at low-water mark. Others rise and fall again, sometimes having a moment of enthusiasm, a sparkle of generosity, and then subsiding into their old routine. But Dr. Channing was always breathing the pure air of the mountain-top. Whenever you went into his room, he would commence some strain of a higher mood, some theme of pure religion, something which would lift you into the realm of eternal truths, something which would make you better and happier during the whole day. In this, he reminded me of what Goethe wrote concerning Schiller, in the service of commemoration after his death: —

“For he was *ours*; and may this word of pride
Drown with its lofty tone pain’s bitter cry!
With us, the fierce storm over, he could ride
At anchor, in safe harbor, quietly.
Yet onward did his mighty spirit stride,
To beauty, goodness, truth, eternally;
And far behind, in mists dissolved away,
That which confines us all,—the Common,—lay.”

I remember Dr. Channing once said, that, of all the words of Jesus, nothing struck him more than his saying to the Jews around him, “Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect.” “Why,” said he, “when I consider what kind of people they were; when I consider the hardness of their hearts, the barrenness of their minds,—the faith in humanity which could inspire such a saying as that, seems to me a marvel of the love of Jesus. You or I,” said he, “would just as soon have thought of saying to these chairs and tables, ‘Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect,’ as to those men.”

I remember a day in October, during the whole of which he spoke of the need of more spiritual life. The topic of that long conversation was *life*: that we might have more life; that

we might have it more abundantly ; that we might have it in the nation ; that we might have it in the churches ; that we might find it in our own souls. It was like one of the Dialogues of Plato ; it was like the "Phædo ;" it was like the apology of Socrates before his judges. It was a strain, all through the day, of aspiration, expectation, hope.

I quoted two verses from Lowell, written at the death of Dr. Channing, in commencing these remarks ; and now, in closing them, I will quote some lines, written at the same time, by our other great American poet, Whittier :—

"Not vainly did old poets tell,
Nor vainly did old genius paint,
God's great and crowning miracle,—
The hero and the saint.

For, even in a faithless day,
Can we our sainted ones discern ;
And feel, while with them on the way,
Our hearts within us burn.

And thus the common tongue and pen,
Which, world-wide, echo Channing's fame
As one of Heaven's anointed men,
Have sanctified his name.

In vain shall Rome her portals bar,
And shut from him her saintly prize,
Whom, in the *world's* great calendar,
All men shall canonize.

How echoes yet each Western hill
And vale with Channing's dying word !
How are the hearts of freemen still
By that great warning stirred !

Swart smiters of the glowing steel,
Dark feeders of the forge's flame,
Pale watchers at the loom and wheel,
Repeat his honored name.

Where is the victory of the grave ?
What dust upon the spirit lies ?
God keeps the sacred life he gave :
The prophet never dies."
